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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2007

In Today's Papers

Secretary Rice in Turkey

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All papers and TV news reports focus on Secretary Rice's visit to Ankara today, the Iraq Neighbors Meeting beginning this evening in Istanbul and Prime Minister Erdogan's upcoming meeting with President Bush in Washington on Monday. Papers report Ankara's strong hope for action against the PKK from the US while some papers consider the upcoming Bush-Erdogan meeting as the final chance for US to show its tangible action plan. Otherwise, Ankara will get tough toward the US as many headlines read 'Ankara does not want to take any advice any more.' According to reports, Rice will try to soften the Turkish attitudes with regard to a possible cross border military incursion against the PKK terrorists in northern Iraq, adding that proposals to be made by the Secretary could not be sufficient to defuse strains. Papers see a Turkish incursion inevitable, and expect Erdogan to search ways with Rice for Turkey's cooperation with the US to that end.

Mainstream Milliyet, under the headlines "Difficult Test for Rice", reports that the Secretary is expected to deliver the message that the solution is not military but diplomatic, taking the fact that no military members will be accompanying her to Ankara as a sign that the US is still not favorable to the idea of a cross-border operation.

Liberal Radikal reports PM Erdogan will tell the Secretary that Turkey does not want advice but wants action.

PM Erdogan-President Bush Meeting on November 5

Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet says that Turkey does not want more advice from the US, noting that President Bush's and PM Erdogan's agendas are very different. The paper adds PM Erdogan wants urgent precautions against the PKK, but President Bush advises to follow diplomatic ways. Also says that as a sign of determination, by

accompanying PM Erdogan in his trip to the US., army commanders will give a message to Washington.

Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak in a banner headline calls the Bush-Erdogan meeting "the most critical summit in 81 years," since Turkey and the UK signed the Ankara agreement on Iraq in 1926, adding that "all cards will be on the table" during the meeting.

Islamist-oriented Zaman reports based on comments by Foreign Minister Ali Babacan at a press conference, Turkey will give "three important messages at the Iraqi neighbors conference: some economic sanctions have been put into effect against northern Iraq; the US administration is the interlocutor when it comes to Iraq; and it is a mistake to rely on mechanisms that don't work."

A common theme among commentators is that the US must make a choice between Iraqi Kurds, in the person on Iraqi leader Mesut Barzani and Turkey. Yasin Dogan writes in Yeni Safak: "The Iraq central government is dependent on the Iraqi Kurds in order to remain standing. Unless there is serious pressure from the US the Kurdish administration won't take steps to meet Turkey's expectations. The leading actor is the US so the ball is in the US court. Will the US be able to eliminate PKK? It should and it can. Unless the US has some other calculations, then it should be able to put the reins on and eliminate the PKK. The stance of the US toward the PKK is so important that it will determine not only the fate of the Turkish-American relations, but also the fate of the region as well."

Writing in Hurriyet Ertugrul Ozkok says "Nobody believes the claim that the US cannot make Barzani listen to it. Everybody knows that without strong US backing, Barzani wouldn't be able to stay on his feet for three days in this region. So rather than making recommendations to Turkey, Barzani should listen to recommendations

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from Washington."

TV Highlights  
NTV

Domestic News

- Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki mediated for solving problems between Turkey and Iraq. Before the meeting of Iraq's neighbors in Istanbul, Mottaki came to Ankara to meet Turkish counterpart Ali Babacan.
- Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad-Ali Hosseini said PKK and PJAK were threat for Turkey and Iran, and adds that there were other powers behind the terrorists.
- Thousands of people joined a rally in Hakkari to denounce the killing of 12 soldiers in Daglica and a raid targeting a wedding convoy in the region.

International News

- US President Bush said his meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan on November 5 will focus on the fight against terror.
- Secretary Rice is arriving Ankara before the Istanbul summit. Ankara will bring its strong expectation to see action against PKK.
- A senior Iranian official said on Thursday that delegates from both Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were satisfied with the results of their new round of talks on Tehran's nuclear program.
- Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani said Turkey banned flights to Northern Iraq.
- The former commander of US forces in the Middle East, retired general John Abizaid, said oil could have American troops tied down there for the next 50 years.

